

PORT OF GULFPORT

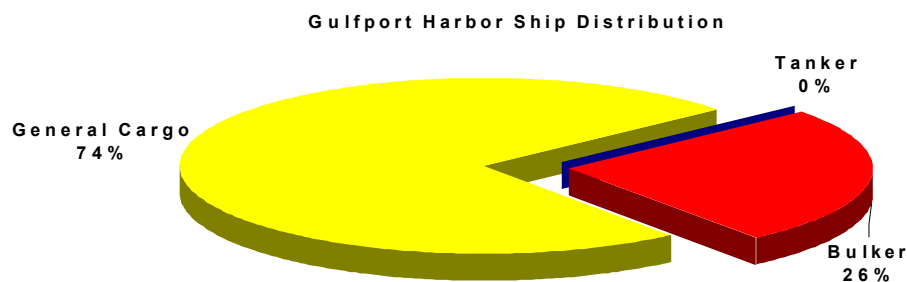
Geographic Location

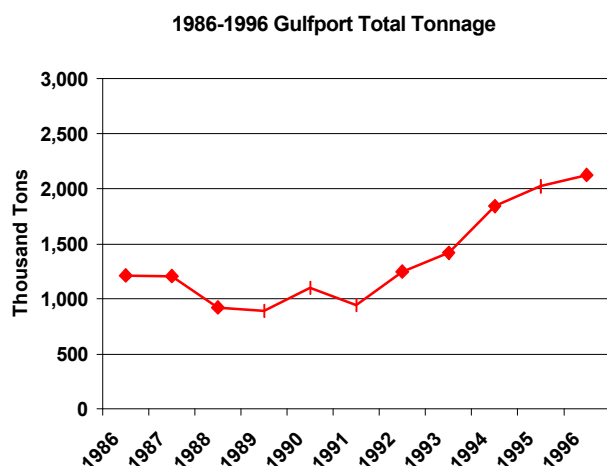
The Port of Gulfport is a 184-acre complex of public facilities located directly on the Gulf of Mexico, approximately 12 miles from sea buoys. Access to the Port of Gulfport is provided by a 12-mile shipping channel, which extends from vessel anchorage just south of Ship Island. The channel is approximately 250 feet wide and is maintained to a depth of 36 feet. The Port harbor and turning basin are approximately 1,320 feet wide. The South Basin is maintained to a depth of 36 feet, and the North Basin is maintained to a depth of 32 feet.

Ranking, Tonnage, and Ship Type

At the national scale, Gulfport is a small port averaging approximately two million tons of cargo annually. Primary inbound cargo consists of bananas, ilmenite ore, mahogany, and pineapples. Outbound cargo is comprised of a variety of containerized cargo and frozen poultry.

1996 Gulfport Harbor Shipping		
Ship Type	Number	1996 Tonnage
Bulker	14	542,174
General Cargo	141	1,578,878
Tanker	1	2,619
Total	156	2,123,671





Facilities

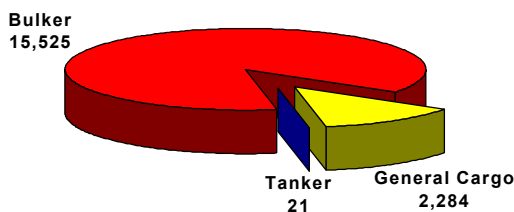
All of the piers at the Port of Gulfport are public, however, most facilities are leased to private operators. The Port consists of 11 berths, ranging from 525 feet to 750 feet in length and from 32 feet to 36 feet in depth. These include two container berths, two breakbulk frozen cargo berths, one breakbulk refrigerated cargo berth, one bulk cargo berth, and five general cargo berths suitable for breakbulk, neo-bulk, project cargo, and ships-gear supported container operations.

The Port is a major Port of Entry for bananas and other tropical fruits for the operations of Dole Fresh Fruit, Chiquita Brands, and Turbana Corporation. Additionally the Port is a major Port of Export for frozen poultry to Russia, via the Port's 93,000 square foot freezer facility leased to I.T.O. Corporation, from Tyson Foods and American Poultry International. The Port also specializes in the receiving and blending of ilmenite ore which is imported from Australia and railed 12 miles inland from the Port to the DuPont titanium plant at DeLisle, MS.

Ballast Water Issues in the Port

As at other Gulf of Mexico ports, the uptake and discharge of ballast water in the Port of Gulfport is a function of the need to maintain maneuverability, the amount of cargo, and the need to negotiate channel depth. There are no bridges within the Port of Gulfport, and ballasting or de-ballasting procedures are not routinely necessary to navigate the port's channel.

Gulfport Harbor 1996 Ballast Water Releases by Ship Type
(data are metric tons; multiply by 263.5 to calculate gallons)



Overseas exports, accounting for 35% of total tonnage in 1996, are assumed the primary contributors of foreign and open-ocean ballast waters to the Port. The total ballast water released from ocean-going vessels during 1996 is estimated at 17.8 thousand metric ton (4.7 million gallons).

Future Plans for the Port

The Mississippi State Port Authority is currently undertaking a \$40 million expansion and improvement project at the Port of Gulfport which is scheduled for completion in the year 2001. This program includes the addition of one new berth, the addition of 29 acres of new terminal backland area to be used to relocate one current tenant, and initiation of the development of the new Mississippi Public Container Terminal. Expansion plans also include the purchase and installation of all equipment necessary to support the new berth and terminal operations. Additionally, part of the Port's long-range expansion program, which will continue through the Year 2010 with a total price tag of \$100 million, includes the possibility of deepening the channel and harbor to a depth of 42 feet.

